(b) what are Government's plans and details to achieve the aforesaid objects within a time frame;

(c) whether ICAR would also be associated to make the project a success;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) whether the number of uneconomic holdings is on the rise and what steps are being taken to transform uneconomic land holdings into economic holdings?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) In his address to the Krishi Expo and National Livestock and Poultry Show, 2000, held on 25th January 2000, the Agriculture Minister had referred to the major initiatives taken by the Government for development of agriculture and expressed the hope that the Exhibition would provide an excellent opportunity to choose appropriate technologies for maximising output and profit.

(b) A regionally-differentiated strategy, based on agro-climatic regional disparities, has been adopted in the Ninth Plan (1997-2002) to realize the full potential of growth in every region.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) The number of small and marginal land holdings had increased to 78 percent of all the holdings in 1990-91 against 76 percent in 1985-86. Diversification of agriculture, more particularly the development of horticulture, has been given a major thrust in the Ninth Plan for improving productivity of land, generating employment, and improving the economic conditions of small and marginal farmers.

Premium Rates for Various Crops

3564. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of States who have implemented new crops insurance scheme;

(b) whether Government have decided the premium rates for various types of crops;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) amount paid by Government as its share of premium to the States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) During Rabi 1999-2000, 8 States and one Union Territory implemented the National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS) in their areas. Five more States and one Union Territory have agreed to join the scheme from Kharif, 2000 season.

(b) and (c) Under NAIS, premium rates in respect of food crops and oilseeds may range from 2.5% to 3.5% during Kharif and 1.5% and 2.0% during Rabi or actuarial rates whichever is less. In respect of annual commercial / horticultural crops, premium will be charged based on actuarial rates.

(d) As per the provisions of the scheme, premium is to be borne by the farmers. However, small and marginal farmers are eligible for subsidy in premium to the extent of 50% which will be shared by the Central and State Government on 50:50 basis. Premium subsidy will be phased out over a period of 5 years.

Scheme of Improve Socio-Economic Condition of farmers

3565. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any scheme to improve the socio-economic conditions for farmers;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, whether such a scheme would be devised to acquaint farmers with latest technology trade and commerce?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) and (b) The Department of Agriculture and Cooperation is implementing a number of Central Sector and Centrally Sponsored Schemes to augment the production and productivity of crops and thereby improve the socio economic conditions of the farmers. A list of these schemes given in the statement. (*See* below)